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THE GRAND JUNCTION PLAN OF CITY GOVERNMENT AND ITS RESULTS

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The free cities of the world have often been the corner stones upon which liberty has been built, and out of which great peoples have arisen. American cities with only delegated powers from state legislatures, limited and bound down in every direction by legislative enslavement, have almost invariably been a shame and disgrace to our civilization. Instead of leading forward to greater and better things, they have retarded and undermined American progress. With increasing velocity each year, for the past ten years, the people have been awakening to the situation, and commission government for cities is the result.

One of the first states to arouse itself was Colorado, and the progressive legislature of 1901, submitted to popular vote a constitutional amendment known by the name of its author as the Rush Bill, adopted in 1902, which amendment gave to every city of the state, the *exclusive* power of making its own charter, unhampered by legislative interference. This constitutional provision requires all such charters to contain provisions for the initiative and referendum. All public service franchises, except the telephone, and all municipal bonds must be authorized by vote of the taxpayers. A more serious defect therein is that our cities are not allowed any control over the incidence of direct municipal taxation. The unjust and unwise general property tax is mandatory. This prevents nearly all fundamental *economic* reform in municipal affairs. These defects, however, were not new conditions, and although they show great lack of faith in municipal democracy and in popular government, and violate the basic principle of local self-government, still the new provisions permit fundamental *political* reform, have been upheld by the courts, and, taken as a whole, are a tremendous advance.

It was pursuant to this progressive constitution that Grand Junction adopted its charter, September 14, 1909. The keynote to

this charter is found in the first sentence of its prefatory synopsis, and is as follows: "The intent and purpose of this charter is to establish a free and independent city, and to restore to and vest in the people of the city, so far as the constitution of the state will permit, their natural, inherent, and inalienable right of local self-government, with all its powers, duties and responsibilities." It is further recited that the purpose of the charter is to establish a municipal democracy. Every effort was made by its authors to make our charter democratic, the most democratic in America. As a first step in this direction, the initiative and referendum was established with the easy preliminary conditions of five and ten per cent for petitions, also the recall for all elective officers, upon petition of twenty per cent of the voters. These percentages are low enough to be easy to operate, and yet high enough to prevent the exercise of personal spleen.

No public service franchise, not even the telephone, can be granted, amended, renewed, extended or enlarged except upon vote. No exclusive franchise can be granted and no franchise renewed prior to one year before its expiration. No contract with any public service corporation can be made for a longer period than two years, except by popular vote. Frequently, long term contracts with such corporations have been entered into by city councils, binding the people to unjust conditions, which succeeding councils could not rectify.

The power to regulate rates and fares of all public service corporations is reserved to the city, and no franchise can include the right to charge for service any return upon the value of the franchise or grant itself. Thus the people will be permitted to reduce all fares or charges to a reasonable interest on the value of the plant, excluding all value of the franchise or right of way through the streets. Street railways are required to sprinkle, clean, pave and keep in repair the space between the tracks and two feet outside the track, and the space between all double tracks, and the common use of all such tracks can be authorized by the city upon just compensation therefor. The city is authorized to make any regulations of any public service corporation to the utmost extent necessary to fully protect the public in every conceivable manner, retaining general supervision thereof.

The city is authorized at any time to take over any public

service plant, paying therefor its fair valuation, excluding from its purchase price, any value of the franchise or right of way through the streets, or any earning power of such corporation. This would allow the city to take over such utility at the actual value of the plant, without buying back the franchise which it had freely given away. If taken over within five years of the grant, however, the city must pay ten per cent in addition to such value, which premium is to be reduced one-half per cent each year thereafter. A full and complete method of valuing and taking over the plant is provided. These provisions are intended to make municipal ownership practical, which it is not when utility corporations are permitted to charge the city as part of the purchase price, the unearned increment value of the franchise. These provisions are known as the indeterminate franchise, in other words, a franchise which can be terminated or regulated at any time by the city, and are among the most vital and far-reaching provisions of our charter.

The Grand Junction plan has destroyed all municipal political machines. It provides for non-partisan nominations by twenty-five individual petitioners. The headless non-partisan and short ballot was adopted. Such a ballot results practically in an educational qualification for voters, and greatly reduces the number of ignorant and corrupt votes.

No city can be well governed by incompetent or bad officials, regardless of the form of government. Political machines are only able to control by minority government. Minority government is bad government. If then we are to establish good government, we must enact some electoral system that will destroy political machines, and prevent the election of officials by minorities. The recall will not do this. The old form of election machinery for city officers is antiquated, and practically all commission cities have greatly changed the old methods by the direct primary or double election system. But even these new methods, while an improvement over old plurality elections, do not give majority rule, and are exceedingly cumbersome, expensive, and ineffective. Serious difficulties have already arisen in a number of commission cities, springing out of political machines and political manipulation. The truth is that national political parties should have no more control over city government than over farming, mercantile, or other business occupations,

The preferential ballot for cities is a plan to restore majority elections and true representative government. It was originated for and first formulated in the Grand Junction charter. It grew out of the Idaho second choice primary law, and the theretofore unformulated and undigested theories of preferential voting. Preferential voting was theretofore mixed up with proportional representation, which is not advisable for cities. Opposite the names of each candidate on our preferential ballot, are three columns, headed "First Choice," "Second Choice" and "Other Choices." This ballot is a two-edged sword, enabling each voter to vote against candidates, as well as for his choices in their order. To vote against a candidate, omit any cross opposite his name, and you thereby place him one vote behind all candidates voted for. To vote for a candidate, make a cross in the appropriate column opposite his name, voting for the first choice in the first column, for the second choice in the second column, and for as many other choices as the voter may have for any office in the third column. Only one choice can be voted for one person, and only one first and one second choice. This method of voting was so simple that even the chief enemy of the system in this city, admitted that it was easily understood and voted by any one. The reason that all favorable choices after the first and second are grouped in the third column is that as between third choices, the voter usually has no fixed preferences.

The judges after the election immediately open, count, register, and return to the city clerk the total number of votes cast, and the number of first, second and third choice votes which each person receives, no vote being counted for any candidate more than once on any ballot. Any person receiving more than half of all votes cast in the city for first choice is elected, otherwise, the lowest candidate is dropped and first and second choices are added together, and if any remaining candidate receives a majority he is elected, but if not, then the lowest candidate is again dropped, and all choices for each candidate are then added together, and the person receiving the largest total number of votes is elected. In case of a tie, priority in choice elects.

This preferential ballot has been adopted with modifications by Spokane, Washington, and Pueblo, Colorado, and is now being adopted by Cambridge, Massachusetts, and strongly advocated in many other cities. Its rapid spread is now assured. Some of these

cities have omitted the scheme of dropping the lowest candidate, as not an essential part of the plan. It was adopted by us for the reason that it adds to the power of each choice over all following choices, and does not enable any candidate to be elected unless he has a respectable number of first choice supporters.

This ballot has all the advantages, with none of the objections, of a direct primary or second election plan, combining in one election the direct primary and final ballot, enables the elector to vote for minority candidates without throwing away his vote, enables the supporters of majority candidates to express their wishes relative to minority candidates, reduces the cost and the number of elections one-half, destroys political bitterness, makes impossible political machines, elects by majorities and not by minorities, and secures the ultimate will of the people more fully than any other plan ever devised. These numerous advantages so far outweigh all defects, as to make the plan almost ideal for use in cities and in direct primaries, or in any election where political parties are not or should not be contesting each other.

The Grand Junction plan is the commission form of government with five commissioners. One of the novel features is the direct and separate election of each commissioner. This plan has been followed by the proposed Cambridge charter. The method generally adopted by commission cities is to elect the four or five commissioners in a body, and to authorize them to apportion the offices among themselves after election. That plan at once opens the way to log-rolling and strife. It makes possible the election of the five most popular candidates, all of whom might be well qualified for one of the offices, and no one qualified for the other offices. Our plan is far more democratic. It prevents the displacing of an efficient commissioner by political intrigue and manipulation. The people are better able to determine the fitness for each office than are the commissioners by trade and assignment after election. By our plan, candidates specially qualified for a particular office will not be candidates for any other office, and any expert in a particular line will stand a better chance for election to the suitable office, thus encouraging each commissioner to become a specialist.

The Grand Junction plan does not make the mayor the "boss" over the other commissioners, but places him on an equality with them, and makes him ex-officio a member of all departments.

It greatly increases many of the powers of the commissioners along some lines, and greatly limits their power along other lines. Department heads are nominated by the commissioner of that department, who also has the right to discharge anyone in his department at any time without giving any reason therefor. He hires all employees in his department, is supreme therein, and responsible therefor, independent of the other commissioners, except that the council may determine the number of employees and discharge any of them, and has a general supervision. The commissioners have no power to make any contract or lease extending beyond the installation of their successors, to deed away any real estate, vacate any street or grant any franchise in the streets without a popular vote thereon. All city wards, the fee system, and all saloons for the sale of intoxicating liquors are abolished. All passes, free tickets, or franks of any public service corporation, whether located wholly within or running into the city, are forbidden. The mayor is judge of the municipal court, and is made the special guardian of juvenile and other unfortunate police classes, and as such judge, is, of course, subject to recall. The water rates of the city are to be kept at actual cost, so that the municipal tax burdens shall not be shifted upon water consumers as they so frequently and unjustly are. Wages, except on construction work, are fixed at a minimum of \$2.50 per day, and the eight-hour day established, so that laborers can live like human beings should live. Each commissioner, like other employees, has the eight-hour day, must give all his time to the city, take active charge of his department, and, when not busy in his office, take general charge as foreman and director. No poll taxes, no occupation taxes for the sale of annually taxed goods, and no license tax against selling fruits and vegetables are allowed. Newspapers are not allowed to charge the city more than usual rates. One of the most important limitations on the power of the commissioners is that they are not permitted to let out street paving or the extending of water works, or the building of sewers, upon contract, but are required to construct such public works by the city, the material being purchased by the Commissioner of Supplies, and the work done by the commissioner of the proper department. The bonds of the city must be sold for cash for the purpose of doing such work, and cannot be traded to contractors for construction. Contractors on public work nearly always charge exorbitant prices,

do poor, fraudulent and cheap work, corrupt officials and enslave labor.

There can be no clear understanding of the great progress made under our charter without considering the conditions prior to its adoption.

Prior to the charter, our city was divided into four wards, the two lying south of Main street having about one-fourth of the electors and nine out of the ten saloons of the city, yet they had one-half of all the aldermen. This condition was intolerable, and strenuous efforts were made from time to time to create another ward north of Main street. All these efforts failed because the city council simply refused to consider the public welfare, and there was no method of compelling such consideration. For four years immediately preceding the first charter vote, the city had been continuously in the hands of republican and democratic machines. Pretending to fight each other, they were always in close alliance. Just prior to the first charter election, these machines had called separate primaries, but after the charter movement, recalled their action and made a formal alignment. Up to that time they had been overwhelmingly dominant, and behind them were men loudly professing party alliance, but whose political principles have always been in harmony with the interests.

What gave vitality and force to our reactionary government were not these machines or men, but the saloon and public service corporations, that is, the favor-seeking interests. The electric light plant had been able to secure a franchise in which an attempt was made to prevent competition. This was as vicious a franchise as could be drawn, and public talk was full of charges of corruption. Afterwards, the council entered into an exorbitant ten-year contract with the franchise company for lighting the city, notwithstanding another company was ready to make a much more favorable contract. No opportunity was given the competing company to make good. A street car franchise was granted containing no adequate protection of the city's interests. Citizens who appeared before the council asking that the rights of the city be protected were given but scanty consideration, and their requests denied.

When women of the city appeared before the council asking that the law against vice be better enforced, they were calmly told to apply to the courts.

The waters of the two rivers which flow by the city contain more or less alkali in solution, are hard, and frequently muddy. For more than twenty years the city has been trying to get mountain water, pure and soft, from the hills. This action was prevented by the reactionaries, who after a thirteen-year war, could not prevent municipal ownership of our water plant. After such municipal ownership, when the interests no longer demanded bad water, the reactionaries changed front, electing machine men to office pledged to mountain water. But they had not made good. Thousands of dollars were paid by the reactionary governments to special attorneys and engineers to get mountain water, most of which was wasted. Bonds to construct these works were hawked about, but could not be sold. In ways too numerous to mention, the money of the city was wasted, and its financial credit impaired.

It was out of such conditions that the city awoke one day, and determined to change the entire system. Arrayed against the proposed charter were all the stand-pat and reactionary forces, the public service corporations, the saloon interests, the political machines of both political parties, the city council and city officials, most of the judges and clerks of election with special policemen appointed for each polling place, together with two daily newspapers controlled by such interests. Supporting the charter were all the churches, the independent and progressive republicans and democrats, the socialists, single taxers, and Chamber of Commerce, the leading daily newspaper, the labor organizations, and a majority of the thinking element. It was a battle royal, and the whole matter was thoroughly threshed out in the newspapers, in the churches and on the stump. By these means the people were thoroughly educated and acted with unusual intelligence and caution. At the election four-fifths of all precincts were carried for the charter, the total vote cast being 1,514 for, and 1,089 against, adopting a charter. Afterwards the progressives nominated twenty-one delegates to the charter convention, consisting of seven members of organized labor, six bankers, one lawyer, one physician, members of all churches, socialists, single taxers, progressive republicans and democrats, and the leading business and real estate men. The reactionaries also nominated a ticket, but withdrew it after finding it would have no show of election. The charter was therefore formulated and

written by the progressives and adopted by an overwhelming majority at the polls.

The first election under the charter was held November 2, 1909. The ticket nominated and presented to the voters is illustrated herewith. The first is the ballot used in the campaign by the progressives, and the second is the official ballot, and contains in ink, the official results of the election.

It will be seen that the Commissioner of Water and Sewers was not opposed in the election, although his office receives a larger salary than three of the other commissioners. This was because

SAMPLE BALLOT

General Municipal Election, City of Grand Junction, Colo., November 2, A. D. 1909

INSTRUCTIONS.—To vote for any person, make a cross (X) in ink in the square in the appropriate column according to your choice, at the right of the name voted for. Vote your first choice in the first column; vote your second choice in the second column; vote any other choice in the third column; vote only one first and only one second choice. Do not vote more than one choice for one person, as only one choice will count for any candidate by this ballot. Omit voting for one name for each office, if more than one candidate therefor. All distinguishing marks make the ballot void. If you wrongly mark, tear, or deface this ballot, return it, and obtain another.

For Commissioner of Public Affairs	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice
D. W. AUPPERLE			
W. H. BANNISTER			
N. A. LOUGH			
E. B. LUTES			
EDWIN M. SLOCOMB			
THOS. M. TODD			
For Commissioner of Water and Sewers	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice
BOSTWICK W. VEDDER			
For Commissioner of Finance and Supplies	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice
LEON J. CHAPMAN			
H. F. VORBECK			
For Commissioner of Highways	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice
JOHN W. ARMSTRONG			
ROBERT M. HARDINGE			
HENRY B. POTORF			
THOS. H. RADER			
S. J. SCOVILL			
For Commissioner of Health and Civic Beauty	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice
CHAS. GASHO			
CHAS. K. HOLMBURG			
D. B. WRIGHT			

HOW TO VOTE. The names of all Charter candidates are printed in red and are arranged alphabetically and in no way indicate a preference, which each voter must decide for himself.

READ THIS

If Aupperle, Lough, Slocumb or Todd is your first choice, and one should be, place an (X) in the 1st Choice column after the name of your candidate for 1st Choice, then place an (X) after the name of the candidate whom you favor for 2nd Choice in the 2nd Choice column, and then place an (X) after the names of the TWO remaining charter candidates for mayor for 3rd Choice. Be sure and vote FOR ALL OF THE CHARTER candidates. You have not done your full duty until you have.

Vote for Vedder for Commissioner of Water and Sewers.

Vote for Vorbeck for Commissioner of Finance and Supplies. Vote for all three Charter candidates for Commissioner of Highways. The Charter candidates are H. B. Potorf, T. H. Rader, S. J. Scovill. Pick your choices, as you did in the majority vote, and vote for one for 1st Choice, one for 2nd Choice and one for 3rd Choice. For Commissioner of Health and Civic Beauty Chas. K. Holmburg and D. B. Wright are Charter men. Vote for one for 1st Choice and one for 2nd Choice.

OFFICIAL BALLOT

General Municipal Election, City of Grand Junction, Colo., November 2, A. D. 1909

INSTRUCTIONS.—To vote for any person, make a cross (X) in ink in the square in the appropriate column according to your choice, at the right of the name voted for. Vote your first choice in the first column; vote your second choice in the second column; vote any other choice in the third column; vote only one first and only one second choice. Do not vote more than one choice for one person, as only one choice will count for any candidate by this ballot. Omit voting for one name for each office, if more than one candidate therefor. All distinguishing marks make the ballot void. If you wrongly mark, tear, or deface this ballot, return it and obtain another.

For Commissioner of Public Affairs <i>Mayor</i>			
1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	Total
465	143	145	753
603	93	43	739
99	231	328	658
41	114	88	243
229	357	326	912
362	293	396	1051
1799	1231	1326	
<i>Total</i>			
For Commissioner of Water and Sewers			
BOSTWICK W. VEIDER			733
<i>Beahturing</i>			950
For Commissioner of Finance and Supplies			744
LEON J. CHAPMAN			
H. F. VORBECK			
<i>Total</i>			
For Commissioner of Highways			
1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	Total
397	109	84	580
266	29	33	88
266	242	267	775
535	311	130	976
555	384	236	1175
1779	1075	750	
<i>Total</i>			
For Commissioner of Health and Civic Beauty			
1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	Total
608	125		733
750	200		950
401	343		744
1759	668		
<i>Total</i>			
<i>Total Vote Cast 1847</i> <i>Majority to Elect 924</i>			

Mr. Vedder, the candidate, had been for many years our City Water Superintendent, was an expert, and was known to be thoroughly efficient. It shows the wisdom of electing each commissioner directly and separately to office, as otherwise Mr. Vedder would have been opposed and might have been defeated in the election, or, if elected, might have been relegated to some other office. Every commissioner was elected to the one office he is best qualified to fill. All officers elected were pro-charter candidates and in every instance, except one candidate for mayor, a newcomer, every pro-charter candidate for any office had a larger total vote of all choices than any anti-charter or reactionary candidate for that office. This fact, taken in connection with the fact that in three previous elections in seven months, the pro-charter proposition had always won out, shows how thoroughly the preferential ballot secures the actual and accurate will of the people.

For mayor, Mr. Bannister received a plurality of first choice votes, although an anti-charter candidate, and under the old method of plurality election, would have been elected mayor, although three other candidates received more votes than he. Under the old plan he would thus have beaten the majority, defeated the will of the electors, and would have represented not the majority, but only a reactionary minority. Had the Des Moines plan of direct primaries, or the Berkeley plan of double elections been in operation, which methods all commission cities except Grand Junction, Spokane and Pueblo have adopted, we would have been obliged to have gone to a bitter second election between two men, Mr. Bannister and Mr. Aupperle, neither of whom had a majority of the people behind them. The superiority of the Grand Junction system of preferential voting was thus absolutely and clearly demonstrated. It secured majority rule, democratic government, able and honest officials, thus defeating the well organized and generally all-powerful minority.

One of the chief arguments used against our charter was that it would hamper our public service corporations, and drive capital from our city. The results have been directly the opposite. When we first voted to adopt a charter, not a foot of street railway was in operation, although the franchise had been granted. Since then, some eighteen or twenty miles of splendid electric street and inter-urban railway have been constructed and placed in operation, and large immediate further extension is contemplated. A large steel

frame block, and suitable car barns, and stations have been erected for the use of the railway and the other public service corporations. Under the commission government the telephone company has placed its wires under ground to the great improvement in the appearance, safety and convenience of the city, especially of its business center. The company has greatly enlarged its plant, constructing a fine two-story building for its use, and has improved its service. The electric light and gas plants have increased their capacity and improved their service, erecting new buildings therefor.

A story will illustrate our methods. A portion of the street railway was constructed along the middle of Twelfth street where an irrigating ditch had a prior right of way. The railway company, after the usual methods of such corporations, filled up the ditch without the consent of its owners, to their great damage. The farmers who owned the ditch became insistent on its restoration, and one Sunday morning when the courts were not open, the company, with a force of perhaps one hundred foreign laborers, began constructing a new ditch, far enough from the railway track not to injure it, thus destroying that half of the street. The commissioners with the full force of police, went to the scene, placed the foreman under arrest, and immediately filled up the ditch. Thereafter, the railway company had a wholesome regard for the present government, and proceeded at their own expense, to procure and place under ground, close to their tracks, tiling large enough to carry the water of the ditch the full length of the street. Another story. In the Denver Charter a provision requiring the railways to pave was omitted. Our charter requires such paving. In the first draft of our paving ordinance as drawn by the paving bond buyers, such provision was omitted. We had it inserted and afterwards our street railway company threatened to resist payment. Owing to a compromise on paving brick and work, the railway finally entered into a contract binding themselves absolutely to pay for all pavement as required, and not to resist the payment of the bonds in any manner. This item alone saved our taxpayers over \$30,000.00.

Our present city government is one of achievement. It has actually done and is doing things of great value, while heretofore the city had only vain hopes and unfulfilled promises.

The commissioners have just finished constructing a new sewer district. The work was done by the Commissioner of Water and

Sewers, and not let on contract. He employed only the best labor, chiefly married men and residents, and paid high wages. A ditch digger of the latest design was purchased by the city, which did the work of seventy-five men with only three men to run it. It is as great an improvement over the shovel as the harvester is over the sickle. By this and other methods of economy, the sewer was built for twenty per cent below the engineer's estimate, permitting \$7,000 of sewer bonds to be cancelled. Heretofore our sewers were built by giving the full amount of the bonds to a contractor for the work and materials, with the result of cheap and poor labor, fraudulent work and materials, and far greater cost. We are now engaged in paving the business section of the city, and in constructing an extension of the water works to the mountains. As a contrast between city work and contract work, the street railway company is at this time paving its nine-foot strip under its tracks, and is employing Greek contract labor, and has the ten-hour day. The city employs American domestic labor, has the eight-hour day, pays five cents per hour more wages, and its labor makes infinitely more for civic progress and true civilization. The city has also completed two flowing artesian wells now furnishing drinking water, and to be used later in irrigating the city park, heretofore arid and useless. Because of this well, a contract has just been made for a natatorium and swimming pool without cost to the city, and finally to become city property. A beautiful five thousand-dollar marble animal fountain was donated to and erected by the city.

The Commissioner of Health and Civic Beauty has greatly improved one of the public parks by shrubbery, flowers, etc., under well planned designs. He established an efficient garbage can collection, keeps the grease traps clean, secured an anti-fly ordinance, and required property owners to destroy the weeds. He removed more than 1,000 wagon loads of filth from the city at one time, and has since kept the city clean and sanitary, with the result of almost eliminating infectious and contagious diseases heretofore very prevalent at this time of the year. Heretofore but little attention was given such matters. City affairs are now carried on with all the accuracy, promptness and reliability of private business. An up-to-date system of accounting and publicity has been established pursuant to the charter, all of which is in contrast to former slipshod methods. For the benefit of the unemployed who are able to work,

the city has established a humanely conducted woodyard under supervision of the mayor and police, at which the out-of-works can get the price of meals and lodging at cost. The fire department, also under charge of the mayor, has purchased a new up-to-date auto-fire-wagon, a very great improvement over the fire wagons heretofore in use. The Highway Commissioner has purchased much modern machinery for the city, such as a concrete mixer, a rock crusher, a steam road roller, etc., all of which will enable the city to do its own work efficiently and cheaply.

The annual cost of maintaining the commission government is less than the cost of the former government. This is made possible by the abolition of the aldermen, turning all fees into the city treasury, making the mayor *ex officio* municipal judge, the commissioner of health and civic beauty *ex officio* city clerk, the commissioner of finance and supplies *ex officio* city treasurer, the commissioner of water and sewers *ex officio* water superintendent, and the highway commissioner *ex officio* street superintendent. The commission government has as yet made but one tax levy, by which it reduced the tax four mills from the previous rate. The city warrant indebtedness was reduced the first year from \$26,000 to \$11,000, a reduction of \$15,000. A large reduction in the annual cost of oil used by the city has been made.

The most strenuous efforts have constantly been made by the interests to destroy the standing of the new government, and to prevent the sale of its bonds. As soon as the commissioners came into office, one of the banks attempted to reduce the price of city warrants from par to ninety-eight cents. This effort, however, was thwarted by the other banks who refused to be a party to such action. Afterwards, at a critical stage in the sale of the water bonds, the president of the same bank, who is also secretary and treasurer of the electric light, the gas, and the street railway plants, in a newspaper interview, threatened to commence suit in both state and federal courts against the charter on the ground that it was unconstitutional. This threat was immediately followed by a surrender of an option for the sale of the water bonds theretofore made with a responsible bonding house. Thereafter the commissioners induced another bond company to purchase the bonds, but, before doing so, the bond purchasers required the city at large expense to furnish their lawyers with certified copies of our charter

and all the proceedings taken in its adoption. The legal objections to the charter were raised in the office of the attorneys for the Telephone Company, whose franchise in this city expires in 1914. After a thorough investigation, the New York attorneys of the bond buyers found that "we do not think there is anything in the objections." In spite of such obstacles, the commissioners sold \$450,000 of five per cent water bonds at ninety-seven cents, a much better price than the former administration received for \$50,000 of its water bonds under far more favorable conditions. The city has also just sold its paving and sewer bonds amounting to \$153,000.00, these latter being district bonds and payable principal and interest in ten annual installments. This bonded indebtedness of \$603,000 was all created by vote, and can only be used for the specific purposes stated by the electors. The cash was received therefor, all of which shows that the credit of the city is the best now under the charter it has even been, and that the finance commissioner is a success. In all these new complicated and sharply contested affairs concerning the constitutionality and legality of the charter and the bonds, the New York attorneys of the bond buyers find that no legal mistakes or blunders of any kind were made by the city.

The number of arrests have dropped from 428 during the last year of the saloons to 162 for 1910 with far stricter police supervision than ever before. When the commissioners came into office, "blind tigers" were very common, they were promptly raided, getting several dray loads of liquor, most of which was destroyed. Vigorous prosecution and imprisonment has since greatly lessened illicit sales. The commissioners had nothing to do with the original passage of the anti-saloon laws, that having been done six months before their election by the people. The commissioners have enforced the laws as far as possible.

One referendum petition has been filed to prevent a proposed ordinance from going into effect, which would compel the payment of water rents semi-annually instead of quarterly. Thereupon, the commissioners repealed the ordinance, and thus complied with the wish of the petitioners. One initiative and referendum petition was filed to contract for a large number of artesian wells, but was defeated by the electors. Three referenda by the city council have been voted upon, and all adopted, these being the three bonding propositions of mountain water, paving, and sewers. Direct legis-

lation in this city has, therefore, in every instance, proved to be a very wise and conservative part of our government.

Since the adoption of our charter the city has had an unprecedented growth. All steel frame buildings in the city have been built during the past two years, one of them five stories high. The finest business blocks, schools, hospitals, ice plants, residences and other improvements ever made in Western Colorado have been made under our charter. An attractive new residence addition to the city has been made. No city in this state is at the present time more prosperous. Many advanced measures, such as the ownership and operation of city coal mines will be undertaken as soon as present improvements are completed.

In conclusion, I desire to call attention to the fact that our new government is exceedingly popular. Not all the commissioners are experts, but they average far better than our former officials. No effort has been made to recall any city officer and the only hope of restoring machine government is in appealing to the courts. So far the reactionaries have only exercised the American privilege of making threats. Only a very few persons in this city, probably not ten per cent now oppose the charter, and these, in the main, represent the interests and their newspaper organ, which has persistently opposed the city officials and the charter. Otherwise the charter is exceedingly and universally popular. Any effort to return to our former government could not now receive respectable consideration, and would scarcely be attempted.